

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is submitted in response to Act 200, Section 21, Session Laws of Hawaii 2003. Section 21 states:

“Provided that the health resources administration (HTH 595) which includes the health Hawaii initiative, a statewide effort to encourage healthy lifestyles emphasizing the healthy development of children to overcome poor nutrition as well as tobacco use and physical activities for better health, shall prepare a detailed progress report each year to include but not be limited to the status of the healthy Hawaii initiative, including a listing of any and/or all statistical successes due to implementation of this programs; and provided further that the report shall identify the impact on the following three components of the health Hawaii initiative:

- (1) community based initiative;
- (2) public awareness and profession educational campaigns; and
- (3) school-based programs;

or any other aspect of the healthy Hawaii initiative success due to the reallocation of funds from the tobacco settlement fund to the healthy start purchase of service under maternal and children health services (HTH 550).”

Public health’s role is to assure the conditions necessary for people to live healthy lives, through community-wide prevention and protection programs. The practice of public health is defined through a list of ten essential services that are the core of how public health serves. Effectively provided, these services will reduce the substantial burden of preventable illness and injury. Costly medical services needed to treat preventable conditions are avoided. Prevention is not only cost-effective; it is fundamental to assuring quality of life for all people.<sup>i</sup>

The Department of Health launched the Healthy Hawaii Initiative in mid-2000 to address the three risky behaviors (that can be changed) of tobacco use, unhealthy eating, and physical inactivity that contribute to the chronic disease burden that consumes over 60 percent of medical care expenditures. In addition, the prolonged illness and disability associated with many chronic diseases – cancer, heart disease, and diabetes, decrease the quality of life for countless people. The Initiative’s coordinated approach to addressing these behaviors has four interrelated components: school-based health; community initiatives; public and professional education; and assessment, research, and evaluation.

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<sup>i</sup> <http://www.phppo.cdc.gov/nphpsp/phdpp/10ES.htm>, and Institute of Medicine (1988), The Future of Public Health. Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press.

The Department of Health uses the following to help guide its investment decisions in the Healthy Hawaii Initiative:

- Magnitude of the issue: severity and scope of the impact of the issue on the health of Hawaii's citizens? current or anticipated health and economic burden?
- Status of current response: what is being done? is it effective? what remains to be done?
- Ability to effect change: modifiable health outcomes? potential impact? potential for addressing several health issues at once through a set of integrated actions? readiness of key players to act?
- Appropriateness for involvement: fits mandate/roles of the Department of Health?
- Cost effectiveness: potential health improvement relative to investments made?<sup>ii</sup>

Components of the Healthy Hawaii Initiative hardest hit by the reallocation of \$5.3 million of tobacco settlement funds in FY 2003-2004 to Healthy Start purchase of service are community-based initiatives (cut by 83%), the Start.Living.Healthy. public awareness/social marketing campaign (cut by 50%), and the professional education campaign (cut by 100%). The school-based health initiatives have been cut by approximately 32%.

S. Leonard Syme, Professor Emeritus of Epidemiology at the University of California, Berkeley, in discussing successful public health efforts, stated, "Most of the successes we have achieved in behavior change have come about because they have been the subject of a multi-pronged, multilevel, multidisciplinary approach. . . Our only hope is to develop better proactive strategies for preventing disease and promoting health, rather than waiting to fix problems after they occur."<sup>iii</sup>

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<sup>ii</sup> Adapted from the Population Health Template: Key Elements and Actions That Define A Population Health Approach, Strategic Policy Directorate, Health Canada, July 2001

<sup>iii</sup> Adapted from his presentation at the 17<sup>th</sup> National Conference on Chronic Disease Prevention and Control, St. Louis, MO, February 19-21, 2003, and published essay in the CDC's e-journal, *Preventing Chronic Disease*, Volume 1: No. 1, January 2004.